SECTION II

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II – NONTECHNICAL SOIL DESCRIPTIONS

INTRODUCTION

Nontechnical soil descriptions describe soil properties or management considerations specific to a soil map unit or group of map units. These descriptions are written in terminology that nontechnical users of soil survey information can understand. Nontechnical soil descriptions are a powerful tool for creating reports for distribution to land users. Soil map unit descriptions and map unit interpretation records are the basis for these descriptions. This subsection contains nontechnical soil descriptions for county or area soil map units *(Available through local USDA-NRCS Service Centers).*

Nontechnical Soil Description - *Sample*

Soil Survey of Sacramento County, California
Map Unit 130 – Cosumnes-Urban land complex, partially drained, 0 to 2 percent slopes*. This map unit is on low flood plains. It is protected against flooding by a system of levees and large upstream dams. Levees, open and closed drains, and pumps have lowered the water table and altered the drainage of the Cosumnes soil. Slopes have been shaped for urban uses. The vegetation is mainly ornamental plants. Elevation is 5 to 20 feet. The average annual precipitation is 17 to 19 inches. The unit is about 55 percent Cosumnes soil and 35 percent Urban land. Included in this map unit are small areas of Clear Lake, Columbia, Sailboat, and San Joaquin soils and soils that have strata of sand between depths of 10 and 40 inches.*

The Cosumnes soil is very deep and is artificially drained. It formed in somewhat poorly drained alluvium derived from mixed rock sources. Typically, the surface layer is pale brown silt loam about 8 inches thick. The next 13 inches is pale brown silty clay loam and clay. The next 22 inches is a buried surface layer of gray clay. Below this to a depth of 60 inches is gray and pale brown clay loam. In some areas the surface layer is clay loam, silty clay loam, or clayey fill.

Permeability is slow in the Cosumnes soil. Available water capacity is high. The effective rooting depth is limited by a seasonal high water table in winter and early spring. The water table is high because seepage is maintained at a depth of 36 to 60 inches by pumping. The shrink-swell potential is high. Runoff is slow. The hazard of water erosion is slight. The soil is subject to rare flooding.

This unit is used for urban development. The main limitations affecting urban uses are the slow permeability, the depth to a seasonal high water table, the flooding, the high shrink-swell potential, and low strength.